

## Aruba's sun catchers!



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# Senate Democrats refuse to go along with GOP spending plan

By LISA MASCARO

AP Congressional Correspondent

**WASHINGTON (AP)**—A day before a shutdown deadline, Senate Democrats are mounting a last-ditch protest over a Republican-led government funding bill that already passed the House but failed to slap any limits on President Donald Trump and billionaire Elon Musk's efforts to gut federal operations.

Senate Democrats are under intense pressure to do whatever they can to stop the Trump administration's Department of Government Efficiency, which is taking a wrecking ball to long-established government agencies and purging thousands of federal workers from jobs.

Trump himself offered to wade in Thursday to negotiate: "If they need me, I'm there 100%."

But the president also began casting blame on Democrats for any potential disruptions, saying during an Oval Office meeting, "if it shuts down, it's not the Republicans' fault."

Democrats are pushing a stopgap 30-day funding bill as an alternative.

But its prospects are dim in the Congress controlled by Republicans. And it's unlikely the Democrats would allow a government shutdown, worried about the further chaos they say



Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., left, walks with Sen. Tina Smith, D-Minn., as Senate Democrats gather behind closed doors to mount a last-ditch protest over a Republican-led spending bill that already passed the House, at the Capitol in Washington, Thursday, March 13, 2025.

Trump and Musk could cause.

As the Senate opened Thursday, with one day to go before Friday's midnight deadline, the Republican Senate Majority Leader John Thune said: "It's time for Democrats to fish or cut bait."

Debates over funding the federal government routinely erupt in deadline moments but this year it's showing the political leverage of Republicans, newly in majority control of the White House and Congress, and the shortcomings of

Democrats who are finding themselves unable to stop the Trump administration's march across federal operations.

In a rare turn of events, House Republicans stuck together to pass their bill, many conservatives cheering the DOGE cuts, leaving Democrats sidelined as they stood opposed. The House then left town, sending it to the Senate for final action.

Options for Senate Democratic leader Chuck Schumer are limited, especially as the party is wary of

fully withholding their votes and being blamed for a full shutdown of services.

Schumer announced that Democrats were unified in pressing for a 30-day stopgap measure as an alternative to the House passed bill, which would instead fund operations through the end of the budget year in September.

With his party united, Schumer said the Republicans, who hold a 53-47 majority, lack the support needed to reach the 60-vote threshold, which is required to overcome a fili-

buster.

But Senate Republicans have shown little interest in Schumer's offer.

As senators convened behind closed doors for another day of meetings, what is more likely is that they will have a chance to vote on the Democrats' stopgap measure, but if it fails as expected, the Senate would then turn to the broader bill for passage, hours before Friday's midnight deadline.

Over the next 24 hours, Democrats face the choice before them: provide the votes needed to advance the package or stand in the way of passing the funding bill in time to avoid a shutdown when money expires midnight Friday.

"They'll cave," predicted Texas GOP Sen. John Cornyn of the Democrats.

Cornyn said the Democrats "have been railing against Elon Musk and the Trump administration over reductions in force of the federal employees, and now they basically want to put all of them out of work by shutting down the government."

He said, "I don't know how you reconcile those two positions."

But progressive Democrats, including allies in the House, are pushing Democrats to draw the line against Trump even if it courts a federal shutdown. □

Associated Press

# Trump's pick for ambassador to Canada says it's a sovereign state



Toronto residents Douglas Bloomfield, left, and his son Phoenix, right, who are on vacation in Washington, hold a Canadian flag and an ice hockey stick to show their support for Canada regarding trade tariffs as they pose with with another visitor to the city wearing a mask of President Donald Trump in front of the White House in Washington, Thursday, March 13, 2025.

Associated Press

By DARLENE SUPERVILLE

Associated Press

President Donald Trump's choice to be U.S. ambassador to Canada on Thursday said that America's northern neighbor is a sovereign state, showing some daylight with Trump on the issue. The president has insisted that Canada would be better off as the United States' newest member.

Former Rep. Pete Hoekstra was asked by at his Senate confirmation hearing by Sen. Chris Coons, D-Del., whether he agreed that Canada is a sovereign state and shouldn't be "even jokingly referred to as the 51st state."

"Canada is a sovereign state, yes," Hoekstra replied. He was questioned shortly before Trump doubled down on his negative views of Canada during an Oval Office appearance with the head of NATO.

The Republican president continues to in-

sist that Canada is among countries that take advantage of the United States. He also continues to erroneously cast the U.S. trade deficit with Canada a natural resource-rich nation that provides the U.S. with commodities like oil as a subsidy.

"We don't need their cars. We don't need their energy. We don't need their lumber," Trump said. "As a state it would be one of the great states."

Trump has rankled Canadians by insisting that their country become the 51st state. The two countries are also now embroiled in a trade war started by Trump after he slapped tariffs on aluminum, steel and other goods brought in from Canada. In response, Canada is hiking tariffs on a variety of American imports.

Hoekstra is a former congressman from Michigan who served as U.S. ambassador to the Netherlands in Trump's first term. □



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## Judge orders Trump to rehire probationary workers let go in mass firings across multiple agencies

By JANIE HAR  
Associated Press

**SAN FRANCISCO (AP)** — A federal judge in San Francisco ordered President Donald Trump's administration to rehire thousands, if not tens of thousands, of probationary workers let go in mass firings across multiple agencies, blasting their tactics Thursday as he slowed the new president's dramatic downsizing of the federal government.

U.S. District Judge William Alsup said that the terminations were directed by the Office of Personnel Management and its acting director, Charles Ezell, who lacked the authority to do so.

White House Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt quickly pushed back, casting the ruling as an attempt to encroach on executive power to hire and fire employees. "The Trump Administration will immediately fight back against this absurd and unconstitutional order," she



Demonstrators rally in support of federal workers outside of the Department of Health and Human Services, Feb. 14, 2025, in Washington.

Associated Press

said in a statement.

Alsup's order tells the departments of Veterans Affairs, Agriculture, Defense, Energy, the Interior and the Treasury to immediately offer job reinstatement to employees terminated on

or about Feb. 13 and 14. He also directed the departments to report back within seven days with a list of probationary employees and an explanation of how the agencies complied with his order as to each

person.

The temporary restraining order came in a lawsuit filed by a coalition of labor unions and organizations as the Republican administration moves to reduce the federal workforce.

"These mass-firings of federal workers were not just an attack on government agencies and their ability to function, they were also a direct assault on public lands, wildlife, and the rule of law," said Erik Molvar, executive director of Western Watersheds Project, one of the plaintiffs.

Alsup expressed frustration with what he called the government's attempt to sidestep laws and regulations governing a reduction in its workforce which it is allowed to do by firing probationary workers who lack protections and cannot appeal.

He was appalled that employees were told they were being fired for poor performance despite receiving glowing evaluations just months earlier.

"It is sad, a sad day, when our government would fire some good employee and say it was based on performance when they know good and well that's a lie," he said. □

## Democratic-led states sue to block Trump administration layoffs at the Education Department

By COLLIN BINKLEY  
AP Education Writer

**WASHINGTON (AP)** — A coalition of Democratic-led states is challenging the Trump administration's sweeping layoffs across the Education Department, saying it amounts to an illegal dismantling of an agency created by Congress.

In a federal lawsuit filed Thursday in Massachusetts, 20 states and Washington, D.C., say the layoffs are so severe that the department "can no longer function, and cannot comply with its statutory requirements."

It alleges the cuts will result in a loss or delay of federal money for public schools, and will leave the agency unable to administer college financial aid or enforce civil rights laws at schools, among other disruptions.

A department spokesperson did not immediately respond to a request for comment. The department has insisted previously it will continue to deliver on its statutory obligations, despite the cuts.

Some Education Department employees have left through buyout offers and the termination of probationary employees. After a layoff of 1,300 people announced Tuesday, the department will sit at roughly half the 4,100 it had when President Donald Trump took office. □



A commuter walks past the headquarters of the U.S. Department of Education, which were ordered closed for the day for what officials described as security reasons amid large-scale layoffs, Wednesday, March 12, 2025, in Washington.

Associated Press



# FEMA launches review of migrant shelter aid, suggesting smuggling laws were violated

By **VALERIE GONZALEZ**  
**Associated Press**

**McALLEN, Texas (AP)** — The Trump administration has launched a review of organizations that provide temporary housing and other aid to migrants, suggesting they may have violated a law used to prosecute smugglers.

The Department of Homeland Security has "significant concerns" that federal grants used to address a surge of migration under former President Joe Biden were used for illegal activities, wrote Cameron Hamilton, acting administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

His letter, dated Tuesday and obtained by The Associated Press, asks recipients of grants from FEMA's Shelter and Services Program to provide names and contact information for migrants served and "a detailed and descriptive list of specific services provided" within 30 days. The letter says funding will be withheld during the review. While it doesn't explicitly threaten criminal prosecution, it raises concerns that recipients may have violated U.S. Criminal Code Section 1324, a felony offense against bringing people across the border illegally or transporting them within the United States. It also



**Catholic Charities of the Rio Grande Valley volunteer Veronica Yoo loads boxes of donations on to a cart at a storage facility in McAllen, Texas on June 24, 2018.**

**Associated Press**

says executive officers must sign sworn statements that they have no knowledge or suspicions of anyone in their organizations violating the smuggling law. Separately on Wednesday, federal prosecutors deliv-

ered subpoenas to homeless shelters in New York City that have been used to house migrants, partially with funding from FEMA. Subpoenas sent to the Roosevelt Hotel and Stewart Hotel in midtown Man-

hattan sought the names, birth dates and other personal information about migrants staying in the shelters, according to two people briefed on the matter who requested anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss the legal process. A similar subpoena was delivered to a building that once housed the the Hotel Chandler, which was converted into a homeless shelter years ago but does not primarily house migrants. Local officials speculated the document may have been sent in error. The similarly named Candler building, an office tower near Times Square, currently serves as a migrant shelter. A spokesperson for the U.S. attorney's office in Manhattan and for the Justice Department in Washington declined to comment. FEMA did not immediately respond to a request for comment late Wednesday. The demand appears to be a new salvo against organizations that provide food, housing and travel aid to people who cross the border. □

# Miami Beach mayor wants to end lease of theater that screened Israeli-Palestinian documentary

**MIAMI BEACH, Fla. (AP)** — The mayor of Miami Beach, Florida, wants to terminate a lease and cut financial support for an independent film theater that screened an Oscar-winning documentary about the conflict between Palestinians and Israelis.

Mayor Steven Meiner introduced a resolution describing the film "No Other Land" as antisemitic. City commissioners will discuss the resolution Wednesday during their next meeting. "No Other Land" opened last Friday at O Cinema, located at the Miami Beach Historic City Hall. Meiner had reached out several days before the premiere to discourage O Cinema CEO Vivian Marthell from showing the film.

"The City of Miami Beach has one of the highest con-

centrations of Jewish residents in the United States," Meiner said in his letter to Marthell.

"The 'No Other Land' film is a one-sided propaganda attack on the Jewish people that is not consistent

with the values of our City and residents."

Marthell initially agreed not to screen the movie in a response to Meiner, but the showing went on as scheduled. Marthell didn't immediately respond Thursday

to an email seeking comment.

In December and January, the city of Miami Beach executed two grants worth about \$80,000 for O Cinema, according to the mayor's proposed resolution. About half the money has already been paid, but the resolution would stop the rest.

The city began leasing space to O Cinema in 2019 with the ability to terminate the contract with 180 days of notice, which is what Meiner is seeking to do.

"No Other Land," which was shot between 2019 and 2023 and released last year, was directed by a group of Israeli and Palestinian filmmakers: Basel Adra, Hamdan Ballal, Yuval Abraham and Rachel Szor. "When the mayor uses the word antisemitism to

silence Palestinians and Israelis who proudly oppose occupation and apartheid together, fighting for justice and equality, he is emptying it out of meaning," Abraham said in an email. "I find that to be very dangerous."

The film documents the destruction of Palestinian villages in the West Bank by the Israeli military. It won the Academy Award for best documentary feature as well as earlier awards. While the film has earned wide praise from film critics, it has also drawn controversy.

"Freedom of expression is an important value, but defamation of Israel into a tool for international promotion is not art," Israeli culture minister Miki Zohar said in a social media post. □



**Basel Adra, from left, Rachel Szor, Hamdan Ballal, and Yuval Abraham, winners of the award for best documentary feature film for "No Other Land," pose in the press room at the Oscars on Sunday, March 2, 2025, at the Dolby Theatre in Los Angeles.**

**Associated Press**



## U.N. report accuses Israel of sexual violence against Palestinians

By JAMEY KEATEN

Associated Press

**GENEVA (AP)** — United Nations-backed human rights experts on Thursday accused Israel of “the systematic use of sexual, reproductive and other gender-based violence” in its war with Hamas in the Gaza Strip.

The allegations came in one of the most extensive reports of its kind on the issue since Hamas’ Oct. 7, 2023, attack on southern Israel ignited the war.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu lashed out at the Human Rights Council, a U.N.-backed body that commissioned the team of independent experts, as an “anti-Israeli circus” that “has long been exposed as an antisemitic, rotten, terrorist-supporting, and irrelevant body.” His statement did not address the findings themselves.

The findings by the Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, which seeks to document in minute detail the allegations and evidence of crimes to bolster accountability for perpetrators, could be used by prosecutors at the International Criminal Court or in other jurisdictions to try to bring justice to victims and their relatives.

In its report released Thursday, the commission examined the widespread



**Chris Sidoti, Member of the Commission, speaks during a press conference about the launch of the latest report of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and Israel, at the European headquarters of the United Nations, in Geneva, Switzerland, Thursday, March 13, 2025.**

destruction of Gaza, the use of heavy explosives in civilian areas and Israeli attacks on hospitals and health facilities. It said all three led to “disproportionate violence against women and children.”

The commission documented a range of violations perpetrated against Palestinian women, men, girls and boys and accused Israeli security forces of rape and sexual violence against Palestinian detainees. Israel denies any systematic abuse of prisoners and says it takes action

when there are violations.

“Our report finds that Israel has increasingly employed sexual, reproductive, and other forms of gender-based violence against Palestinians as part of a broader effort to undermine their right to self-determination,” Chris Sidoti, a member of the commission, told reporters in Geneva.

Israel’s mission in Geneva rejected the allegations and accused the commission of relying on “second-hand, single, uncorroborated sources.”

Since the commission was set up in 2021 long before the Oct. 7 attacks in Israel Israel has refused to cooperate with it, accusing the investigative team and the council of bias.

Commission member Sidoti said the report “also concludes that Israel has carried out genocidal acts through the systematic destruction of sexual and reproductive health care facilities.”

The commission stopped short of accusing Israel of genocide, as some ad-

vocacy groups and other rights experts have. Israel, which was established in the wake of the Nazi Holocaust and is home to many survivors and their families, has vigorously denied such allegations.

Israel says it took extraordinary measures to avoid harming civilians in the 15-month war, which has been paused by a fragile ceasefire.

It blames civilian deaths and destruction on Hamas because the militants operate in residential areas. Israeli forces carried out a number of raids on hospitals, accusing Hamas of using them for military purposes, allegations denied by Palestinian health officials.

Pointing to the report, a Hamas statement urged international courts to prosecute Israel’s leaders.

The International Criminal Court has issued arrest warrants for Netanyahu and his former defense minister, accusing them of war crimes, which they deny. The court also issued a warrant in November for Hamas’ military leader, but the militants have since confirmed that he was killed.

The war began when Hamas-led militants attacked southern Israel on Oct. 7, 2023, killing some 1,200 people, mostly civilians, and taking 251 hostages. □

Associated Press

## Measles cases in Europe and Central Asia doubled last year to the highest reported level since 1997

**LONDON (AP)** — There were 127,350 measles cases reported in Europe and Central Asia in 2024, double the number of cases reported the previous year and the highest number since 1997, according to an analysis by the World Health Organization and UNICEF. In a report published on Thursday, U.N. health experts said Romania had the most measles infections, at more than 30,000, followed by Kazakhstan, which reported 28,147 people with measles. UNICEF said that about 40% of measles infections in Europe and Central Asia were in children under 5 and that more than half of all people sickened by measles had to be hospitalized. Measles is among the world’s most infectious diseases and is spread by an airborne virus. Two doses of the measles vaccine is esti-

mated to be 97% effective in preventing the disease, which typically infects the respiratory system and causes symptoms including fever, cough, runny nose and a rash. In serious cases, measles can cause pneumonia, encephalitis, dehydration and blindness.

“Measles is back, and it’s a wake-up call,” Dr. Han Kluge, WHO’s Europe director, said in a statement. “Without high vaccination rates, there is no health security.” WHO and UNICEF noted that in both Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro, fewer than 70% and 50% of children in those countries respectively have been vaccinated against measles for at least the past five years. Scientists estimate that more than 95% of the population needs to be immunized to prevent outbreaks. □



**A vial of the measles, mumps and rubella vaccine is on display at the Lubbock Health Department Wednesday, Feb. 26, 2025, in Lubbock, Texas.**

Associated Press



# U.N.: Sudan war is world's worst humanitarian crisis: 30 million need aid, 16 million of them kids

By **EDITH M. LEDERER**

**Associated Press**

**UNITED NATIONS (AP) —**

The war in Sudan has created the world's largest and most devastating humanitarian crisis with over 30 million people needing aid this year, 16 million of them children trying to survive in dire conditions, the head of the U.N. children's agency said Thursday.

With no end in sight to the nearly two-year conflict, Catherine Russell told the U.N. Security Council that children in Sudan are enduring "unimaginable suffering and horrific violence."

An estimated 1.3 million children live in places where famine is occurring, and more than 770,000 children are expected to suffer "severe acute malnutrition" this year and without aid many of them will die, she said.

Sudan plunged into conflict in April 2023, when long-simmering tensions between its military and paramilitary leaders broke out in the capital, Khartoum, and spread to other regions, including the vast western Darfur region.



**In this photograph released by UNICEF, a 16-year rape victim rests on a mattress at a UNICEF office in Sudan, Dec. 2, 2024. According to UNICEF, the girl and her 19-year-old sister, were kidnapped, beaten and raped by soldiers for four months, before they escaped and later learned they were both pregnant.**

Since then, at least 20,000 people have been killed, though the number is likely far higher, and more than 14 million have been driven from their homes.

The UNICEF executive director said 80% of the more than 900 grave incidents against children reported in the last six months of 2024

were killings or maimings, primarily in Darfur, Khartoum and Gezira province. "Sadly, we know these numbers are just a fraction of the reality," she said.

Russell said sexual violence used to terrorize the Sudanese population is pervasive, with an estimated 12.1 million women and girls

and increasingly men and boys at risk right now. She said this is an 80% increase from last year.

According to data UNICEF analyzed from groups providing services in Sudan, there were 221 reported cases of rape against children in 2024 in nine provinces, she said. UNICEF es-

timates that 67% of rape victims were girls and 33% boys.

"In 16 of the recorded cases, the children were under the age of five. Four were babies under the age of one," Russell said.

She stressed that this is only a glimpse of what UNICEF knows is a far larger crisis, with survivors or their families often unwilling or unable to come forward.

Christopher Lockyear, secretary-general of Doctors Without Borders, known by its French initials MSF, who was in Khartoum province six weeks ago, told the council that both sides in the conflict are compounding the suffering of civilians. Government forces have indiscriminately bombed populated areas, and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces and allied militias have engaged in systematic sexual violence, abductions, mass killings, the looting of humanitarian aid and occupation of medical facilities, he said.

"Both sides have laid siege to towns, destroyed vital civilian infrastructure, and blocked humanitarian aid," he said. □

**Associated Press**

## Lebanon seeks to firm up state authority by naming new army chief, top security officials

**BEIRUT (AP) —** Lebanon appointed a new army chief and heads of three secu-

city agencies on Thursday as the government seeks to firm up state authority,



**In this photo released by the Lebanese Presidency press office, Lebanese president Joseph Aoun, right, poses for a picture with the newly appointed Lebanese army chief Gen. Rudolph Haikal, at the presidential place in Baabda, east of Beirut, Lebanon, Thursday, March 13, 2025.**

**Associated Press**

especially in the country's south, following the militant Hezbollah group's devastating war with Israel.

The appointments also come after Lebanese political faction in January overcame a crippling, two-year deadlock, electing a president, Joseph Aoun, a former army chief, and forming a new government under Prime Minister Nawaf Salam.

A U.S.-brokered ceasefire went into effect in late November, halting nearly 14 months of fighting between Hezbollah and Israel. The militants began firing rockets into Israel on Oct. 8, 2023, a day after a deadly Hamas-led incursion into southern Israel

that sparked the war in Gaza.

Israel responded with shellings and airstrikes in Lebanon, and the two sides became locked in an escalating conflict that became a full-blown war last September.

In announcing the new appointments, Aoun also said that five Lebanese nationals detained by Israeli troops during the fighting have been released following indirect negotiations.

Morgan Ortagus, deputy special envoy for Middle East in the Trump administration, told Lebanon's Al Jadeed television on Tuesday that the five were a mix of soldiers and civilians.

Ortagus said she was confident Lebanon and Israel would resolve outstanding territorial disputes.

The new appointees include army chief, Gen. Rudolph Haikal; head of State Security agency, Brig. Gen. Edgar Lawandos, and Brig. Gen. Hassan Choucair, who was named head of General Security. Brig. Gen. Raed Abdullah was named head of Internal Security Forces.

Lebanon would also recruit 4,500 soldiers this year to help further increase its military's presence in its southern region. Also Thursday, a delegation from the International Monetary Fund wrapped up a four-day visit to Lebanon. □



# Aruba: the legend behind its name

**(Oranjestad)—Most folkloric tales and legends in Aruba revolve around our indigenous ancestors, who came from mainland Venezuela, and discovered the island and made it into their new home. This particular legend tells the story of the birth of the Aruba name.**

The legend follows the life of Arua, an indigenous Cacique originally from Aroa in the Falcon state in Venezuela in the year 50 AD. Arua had a son around the year 70 AD with his wife Shira, who they named Corobori. When Corobori was old enough, he joined his father on the usual boat trip to the islands of Curacao and Bonaire to gather salt.

On their way back to Mainland Venezuela, they were caught up in a heavy rain storm—a side effect from a passing, but far away, hurricane. Of course, because of the lack of motors and sail, their boat was left in the mercy of the heavy winds. After a while, the storm started to pass, and the clouds began to clear up. Finally able to see around them, the Cacique spotted land approximately an hour away. So, they started to row in that direction until they reached the coast.

Once they arrived on what they thought was Venezuela, they decided to stay the night and fix their kayak. The next morning, the Cacique ordered his son and a few warriors to go find any sign of population in the area: "Corobori," Arua said. "Don't come back without news. It's in your hands how long we stay here till we find our family. So, if you need to take a week to gather information, we will wait for you."

"Don't worry," Corobori replied. "As soon as we have any information, we will let you know." Armed with arrows and spears, backpacks filled with food and water containers, they set off. They climbed several small hills, but no sign of a village. They crossed different dry riverbeds, but no sign of anything. When the sun finally descended, they found themselves near a fairly tall hill and decided to climb it for a better view of a village. This hill was called Pan Dushi or Orcuyo, which today we call Hooiberg.

The next morning, they could clearly see that they have landed on an island, but an unfamiliar one at that. When Corobori went back to where his father was waiting, he told him the news: "Father Arua, you have just discovered an island, but it is not Curacao or Bonaire. Far in the south, we saw the big mountains of our homeland Venezuela, which we could have never seen on the other island. This leads us to believe we are on a new island. But that's not all. When the sun came up, we saw in the distance a glowing plain, which we think may be salt."

The Cacique was pleased to hear of his son's findings. He decided to stay a couple days on the newly-discovered island in search for salt. The next morning they ascended Hooiberg again and stayed to see if they could find nearby smoke, indicating an inhabitant village. But they found nothing. So they went back to their initial arrival settlement, now known as Santo Largo in Savaneta. The next morning they hiked along the Spaans Lagoen near the Mangel Halto Beach and reached the area of Bushiri. There, they boarded their kayaks and heading to what we know now as Malmok, where they found rocks of salt. After a couple days of exploring the island and gathering some salt rocks, they left for Venezuela, where they were reunited with their families.

Throughout the year, they travelled back and forth to Aruba, collecting salt. After a while they settled on the island, generations of families living along the coast. Corobori was the first indigenous inhabitant in our history to explore the entirety of the island.

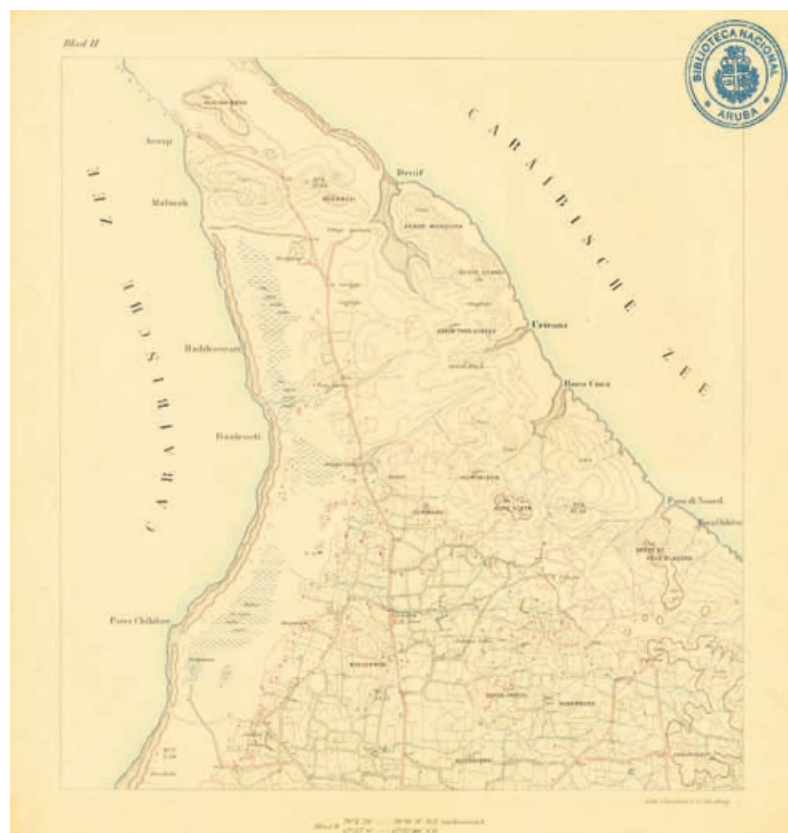
Arua, after decades as the leader of his tribe, spent his last days on the island. Having reached 80 years old, he called for his family on his death bed. In his hammock, he said: "My children, many years have passed, and I've asked my warrior to bring me back to the island so I can laid to rest. The God of living has given me the gift of life to see my son, grandchildren and great grandchildren. But now he is calling me home. Corobori, my torch is now passed to you. Guide our people, and be the leader you were always meant to become. If one day you leave my island, do not forget that it is also yours. This is my last wish: When I die, bury me in our maize plantation."

And so when the Cacique passed away, his wishes were granted and he was laid to rest in the area we now know as the Paradera Cemetery. Where he used to live, they built the Paradera Church.

And that is the tale of what inspired the Aruba name. In the generations that lived or travelled back and forth to the island, there were many familiar names\*, like Guadiriki, a warrior who was there when the island got discovered and his son, whom he called Huliba; Corobori and his children, Corodori, Camacuri and Turibana, Masiduri; and Malmok, the 13-year-old boy who alerted the Cacique when the Caribes attacked.

Familiar names: all these names are familiar to Arubans, as these are the names of places and plants on the island.

**Source: Un storia di e Indjan Arua (A story of the Indian Arua) by Adolf (Dufi) Kock**







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## Aruba's underwater wonderland



**ORANJESTAD** - Exploring the underwater wonders is something you should definitely do during your stay in Aruba. The underwater world has everything to offer that makes a snorkel trip so exceptional; an impressive, colorful sea life with exotic fishes, turtles and beautiful coral reef. The historic shipwrecks, located on the Aruban seabed are also worth a visit. Aruba is known for its white beaches and blue oceans, which means there are many fascinating under water spots, where you can take your snorkeling gear and we selected the top spots for you.

### Tres Trapi

Tres Trapi means tree steps in Papiamentu, Papiamentu is together with Dutch the official language spoken on Aruba. The beach is called Tres Trapi because it is accessible by the tree steps carved into the rocks. Tres Trapi is a small rocky beach, located on the north-western side of the island, approximately 5 to 10 minute drive from Palm Beach. From the unique steps you can easily walk over the beach into the clear and turquoise blue ocean. While snorkeling you will encounter all kind of tropical fishes and sea stars. The kind of starfish you will find in the Aruban waters is the red cushion sea star. This is a starfish that is commonly found in the shallow waters of the Caribbean sea and if you are lucky during your snorkeling visit to Tres Trapi, you may come across one of the green sea turtles. Respect the animal, keep your distance and enjoy the view. Also remember; it is a once in a life time experience.



to Aruba, because it had to find a neutral port. When Germany invaded the Netherlands on May 10, 1940, the crew decided to let their own ship sink, to prevent it from falling into the hands of the Dutch Navy. Antilla lies on its port-side in Malmok bay, and the sunken world war two ship is now one of Aruba's most popular snorkeling and dive spots. However, the ship wreck can only be reached by boat. The ship is visible from the surface and during your snorkeling trip you be surrounded by hundreds of tropical fishes, but the ship wreck alone is already impressive enough.

the water remains shallow and there are still many underwater wonders to see. In the ocean there is an area marked until where it is recommended to snorkel and on the beach you will find different facilities. It is a perfect beach to spend your day snorkeling and relaxing.

### Antilla shipwreck

Antilla is a 400-foot-long long ship, built in 1939 in Hamburg, Germany. Antilla came

### Mangel Halto

Mangel Halto beach is located in Savaneta, on the southern-west part of the island. The beach is different from the other beaches in Aruba; it is beach full of mangroves. You reach the beach by a bridge through the mangroves and then you will have several entrances to the sea. There are diverse spots where you can enjoy a perfect beach day, wooden stairs made to enter the water and a dock to sit on and enjoy the view. Mangel Halto is also worth a visit for the snorkeling experience. Inside the bay, the water is clear and you find many colorful fish. Outside the bay is a bit more challenging for beginners because of the wind and the waves, but the coral is alive and it is just like snorkel heaven. □

### Baby Beach

Baby beach; a white beach, with a crystal blue ocean. The beach is located on the southern part of the island. On the way to the famous beach, you will drive through the old capital of Aruba, San Nicolas. The old Aruban culture can be still felt and experienced here, so do not hesitate to get out of your car and walk around for a while. Baby beach is a child friendly beach, since it is shallow and the water has a pleasant temperature. The name therefore fits well with the beach. Baby beach is an excellent beach for snorkeling, especially if you want to go with small children, because



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## Join ACF's Full Moon Hike!

The Aruba Conservation Foundation (ACF) is hosting another one of their famous Full Moon Hikes and is inviting the community to participate for spectacular hike through Aruba's National Park Arikok.

Tonight, March 14th, starting early in the morning at 6:30 PM, the group will meet at the Arikok Visitor Center at San Fuego, Santa Cruz. The hike will take you through Miralamar, Stairs to Sero Jamanota, Conecction Road and Northern Loop. Participants are asked to bring a small flashlight. This hike will take approximately 2.5 hours and covers 4.1 km / 2.5 mi of distance. Don't miss on an opportunity to get up close to nature as you trail under the guidance of an experience ranger. Register using the link <https://forms.office.com/r/JJx3Bfd9AT>. or call the ACF at 585-1234 for more information. Limited spots available. □

Picture credit: Aruba Conservation Foundation

## Total Lunar Eclipse visible in Aruba tonight!

Aruba Astro Research Int., the national astronomy association of Aruba, through its president, Mr. Marcos Bislip, officially announces that on tonight March 14, 2025, a celestial event will take place: a Total Lunar Eclipse of Saros 123, also known as the Blood Moon.

This phenomenon occurs when Earth's deep shadow completely covers the lunar surface (100%) due to a perfect alignment between the Earth, Moon, and Sun. In this alignment, Earth blocks the sunlight that the Moon would normally receive. This event is visible from the part of the Moon facing Earth and from specific regions of the world, while other areas will not witness it.

In this case, our region will see the event on March 14, 2025, while Asia will experience it on September 7, 2025.

If weather conditions cooperate, we will have a successful total eclipse observation.

Lunar Eclipse Saros 123 - Visibility in Aruba

The Total Lunar Eclipse Saros 123 will be observed in Aruba according to the following schedule:

Penumbral Eclipse begins: 11:57 PM (March 13, 2025)

Partial Eclipse begins: 1:09 AM (March 14, 2025)

Total Eclipse begins: 2:26 AM (March 14, 2025)

Maximum Eclipse: 2:58 AM (March 14, 2025)

Total Eclipse ends: 3:31 AM (March 14, 2025)

Partial Eclipse ends: 4:47 AM (March 14, 2025)

Penumbral Eclipse ends: 6:00 AM (March 14, 2025)

### Eclipse Details

Magnitude: 1.178

Total duration of the eclipse: 6 hours and 3 minutes

Duration of the partial eclipse: 2 hours and 33 minutes

Duration of the total eclipse: 1 hour and 5 minutes

Duration of the penumbral eclipse: 2 hours and 24 minutes

Best viewing direction: Low in the sky

### Live Broadcast and Observation

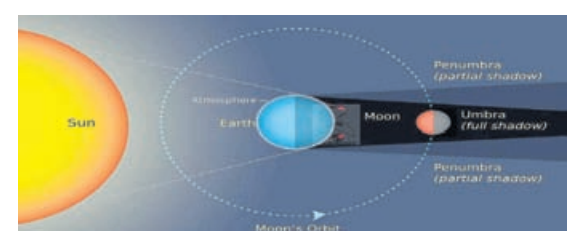
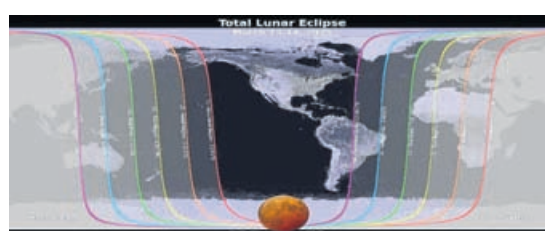
Aruba Astro Research Int. will broadcast the Total Lunar Eclipse Saros 123 live with the help of expert colleagues using modern telescope technology. Rinus Van Geemen, a member of Aruba Astro Research Int., will be responsible for the transmission.

The eclipse will be streamed on: Facebook and YouTube, available worldwide.

Meanwhile, the audio broadcast will be aired on TOP FM 95.1, the radio station that previously broadcast two partial lunar eclipses. This time, it will be a total eclipse, and the remote broadcast will be handled by Sunrise Radio Aruba for TOP FM 95.1 within the Hit Express program, with a special edition dedicated to the Total Lunar Eclipse Saros 123 in digital stereo HD.

Additionally, Aruba Astro Research Int. will take photographs and record footage of the lunar eclipse.

This celestial event will be visible throughout Aruba, and the best viewing experience will be from darker locations. □





# Sun catchers: The different lizards in Aruba



**ORANJESTAD – Colorful or camouflaged, you're bound to encounter a variety of lizards basking in the sun or scurrying on their way in our island. From the charming, friendly iguanas to the good-luck gecko Pega-Pega, you're bound to meet a few of these special residents during your visit.**

Aruba, as a desert island, is home to an incredible variety of unique and colorful species. Among them we can find different lizards, most of which have South American origins. But there are a few exceptions.

## Iguanas

Iguanas are easy to spot, as they are larger than most other lizards and when young, have a bright green color that makes them stand out.

The iguanas usually found in Aruba are the Iguana iguana, known as the green iguana, or locally as Yuwana. The Yuwana are a mostly herbivorous species, and can grow up to 2 meters in size, including the tail, making them one of the largest in the iguana family. As you will see, despite their name, as they reach adulthood, the iguanas can take on a grey or blue tone instead of the bright green displayed by the young ones. In Aruba – as in the rest of the Kingdom of the Netherlands – the most usual color varies from green to lavender, black and sometimes a reddish brown.

Yuwana is a protected species, as it is listed under Appendix II of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), meaning that international trade is regulated through the CITES permit system. In the past, Arubans used to eat a popular Yuwana soup, as it was believed to give strength and help restore health – probably due to the protein boost it delivered.

However, it is now illegal to catch, kill, buy or sell Yuwanas in Aruba, and this includes eating them!

## Turnip-tailed gecko



The turnip-tailed gecko is known locally as the Pega-Pega, meaning sticky-sticky, due to the way it sticks to walls using the suction in its little fingers. They are found inside houses, and are mostly a nocturnal animal.

According to Etnia Nativa, the local Pega Pega is immediately recognizable by its large size, with a body length of up to 12 cm, and its large, swollen tail, approximately the same length or slightly shorter than its body; females are larger and more robust than males. It has short, robust legs with flattened toes and extensive basal webbing. The undersides of its toes are covered in lamellae, which are used as friction pads to cling to smooth vertical surfaces. Some can even walk around completely upside down. Its toes are covered with ridges, which are peppered with millions of microscopic bristle-like structures called setae that attach and detach when the animal wills them to, and they never get gunked up.

They are variable in coloration, from a mottled dark gray to orange-brown, and are capable of changing color depending on their mood and surroundings. Mottled and banded markings aid in camouflage against tree bark. They are harmless and fragile; you can hold one in your hands as long as you

are VERY gentle.

Never put pressure on its tail because it will surely drop as a measure to try to distract the predator, and they are different from other lizards because they're long-lived, talkative, lack eyelids, and their small scales are situated next to each other like cobblestones rather than overlapping as is the case in most other lizards.

Turnip-tailed Geckos are insectivorous and feed on cockroaches, grasshoppers, beetles, flies, mosquitoes, and spiders, which makes them the best pest control to have at home! They spend their days concealed in dark tree grooves and cavities, in narrow crevices in the walls, or behind paintings, which provide the perfect shelter for them. Pega pega is a gecko endemic to our island, but in time, some 4–5 intrusive gecko species have been observed, some of which do not cease to amaze us with the racket they make, especially during the hours of the night.

The Pega-pega Phyllodactylus Julieni is also a protected species in Aruba, by law. It is illegal to kill them!

## Blue Kododo

These are one of the most striking lizards in Aruba, recognizable by the male's bright blue color. The Aruban whiptail lizard, Cnemidophorus arubensis, is a species endemic to Aruba, meaning you can only find it here on our One Happy Island! They are also recognized as the most common and populous lizard on the island. While the male is blue with white dots, the female is brown with blue dots.

These charming lizards eat mostly plants, such as flowers, nectar, leaves and fruits, and occasionally enjoy some insects. They are selective in which plants they eat, because of the toxins present in many available plants species. The Kododo help take care of Aruba's vegetation by playing a significant role

in the dispersal of seeds for certain plants: when they eat fruit, they excrete the seeds in diverse locations, contributing to the reproduction cycle of our local plants.

## Striped anole



The striped anole (*Anolis lineatus*) that lives in Aruba is known locally as Waltaka or Toteki. This is a species of lizard in the family Dactyloidae, and they are native to Aruba and Curaçao. It is usually found in dry areas, commonly where there are not large trees; rather they enjoy rocks, walls or tree trunks, as they prefer to stay close to the ground.

These lizards are about 7cm in length, have a brown color with a stripe on each side and typically, several stripes on the body and tail that are lighter in color. It has a dewlap which is orange-yellow – and what's unique about this species is that it is the only known species of anole where the dewlap is asymetrically colored, with one side being a deeper orange and the other side a lighter yellow. Mostly this is seen in the males, as it is almost imperceptible in the females. If the Toteki shows you his dewlap, retreat! This is not a friendly greeting!

Lizards are wonderful creatures that are precious to our fragile, local ecosystem. Please be mindful of these residents as you enjoy your stay.

**Images: Some images are from Aruba Birdlife Conservation.**



Aruba Birdlife Conservancy



## Ever heard of the cah'i orgel?

### A key instrument in Aruban folklore music

**(Oranjestad)—The cah'i orgel music box is an important and unique instrument that is used on the ABC islands in the Dutch Caribbean. This instrument is a staple in our folklore music, and its significance in the traditions of Aruba has and continues to bring together the old and young.**

The origin of the cah'i orgel is said to have come from Europe around 150 years ago. A cross breed between the barrel piano and the organ, the most popular stories said that the instrument came from either England or Germany, but made its way to Italy down to Venezuela, where in 1881, Mr. Horatio Sprock (1866-1949) from Curacao was first introduced to it. After that, Sprock made his own cah'i orgel "Josefina", and successfully debuted it on the streets of Barquisimeto. Back in Curacao, he started his own cah'i orgel business along with his brother Luis. In Aruba, it is said that the cah'i orgel was introduced by Rufo Wever, who later in his career became one of the composers for the Aruban national anthem.

Rufo Wever was a young musician in 1937 when

he established his own cah'i orgel business on the island. Before that he experimented with his uncle's cah'i orgel, and he over the years he learned to build and repair the instrument. In fact, he was incredibly skilled in this, and he was one of the few to have recognized from the start that the cah'i orgel is an instrument that needs preserving.

As mentioned, the cah'i orgel is a music box. made from mahogany wood, it contains a cylinder with a maximum of eight music pieces. By rotating the lever on the front side of the box, the cah'i orgel produces music similar to that of a piano, and is accompanied often by someone else playing the "wiri", a percussion instrument made out of steel and reminiscent to the Spanish guiro. Back then, you would often also find someone playing the triangle alongside the cah'i orgel and wiri. In Aruba, the cah'i orgel and wiri is used for traditional music genres, such as the Aruban waltz, tumba, mazurka and more.

Fun fact: another name for the cah'i orgel is the



"tingilingi box."

Source: "E Cilinder Magico entre Aruba y Curaçao" by Marilyn Alcalá-Wallé, Herta Parabirsing-Balentina and Nidia Rosaria-Wallé.



**(Oranjestad)—This week we remember one of our most beloved Aruban giant, Juan Chabaya Lampe—better known as Padu Lampe or Padu del Caribe. As one of the most important and renowned artists in the Aruban cultural sphere, Padu's long career led him to be honored today as "the father of culture."**

On April 26th, 1920, Juan Chabaya Lampe "Padu Lampe/Padu del Caribe" was born in Nassaustraat, Oranjestad. He grew up in a happy musical environment, and it is because of this that he developed a love for music. Starting from the age of 12, he was agile in the clarinet, mandolin and cuatro. Henry Lampe, his father, was also a well-known pianist and musician.

In a publication of the informative seminar, "Observer", from august 1st, 1962, Padu's many merits and friend-

## Meet our Aruban trailblazers:

### Padu Lampe

ly personality stood out. It was said that he was an excellent pianist with a personal style and full of surprises. Secondly, though the composer was not too familiar with music theory, he showed innovations in his compositions. Lastly, Padu was a promoter of Creole music around the world. One of the most important moments in Aruban history, in which he was able to witness first-hand, was the first radio broadcast on the island on March 20th, 1954. Here, he was accompanied by Antillean guitarist Julian Coco and Hubert "Loi" Booi. In the art world, Padu was also a known painter. During his youth, he made several painting using his unique style. In 1939, he participated in an art exhibit in New York, where he won a bronze medal for his painting "Typical View of Aruba."

Padu remained a popular artist within the Dutch Antilles and the Caribbean as a pianist, singer, author and painter. Padu Lampe was a local artist who became renowned in Venezuela, Colombia, The U.S. and The Netherlands too. In the 1950s, he sold no less than 50 thousand copies of his long-playing albums (LPs). Padu Lampe was a multifaceted artist, inspired by his interest in parapsychology and supernatural phenomenon. He wrote three books in Papiamentu on the subject in 1986, which was published by the Aruban National Printing Press with sponsorship provided by the Prince Bernhard Funds Netherlands Antilles.

Besides that, Padu passed his exam on "Society to Advanced Ethical Hypnosis" in 1964 in New Jersey. He received a certificate as a hypnotechnician, which gave him the authority to practice hypnosis in some states.

Over the course of his career, he received many accolades and awards in Aruba, Curacao, Venezuela and the Netherlands.

Padu del Caribe passed away on November 29th, 2019, at the age of 99 years old. Padu brought the Aruban culture around the world. His legacy will remain ingrained in the Aruban cultural history, and he will be known forever as one of the most influential trailblazers of our

community.

Padu will always be in Aruba's heart, because he had composed various special songs dedicated to the mothers of the island; his song "Sonrisa di un baby" ("A baby's Smile") has been written in three different languages. Padu also wrote our national anthem "Aruba Dushi Tera", along with Mr. Rufo Wever. This song was approved by the government of Aruba and was named the official anthem of the island in 1976.

Other songs that have been considered as being almost a second anthem for Arubans is the special composition he wrote for his wife Daisy Croes called "Abo so". Daisy later passed away in 1994. □



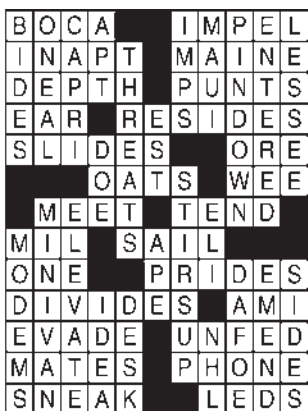


# CROSSWORD

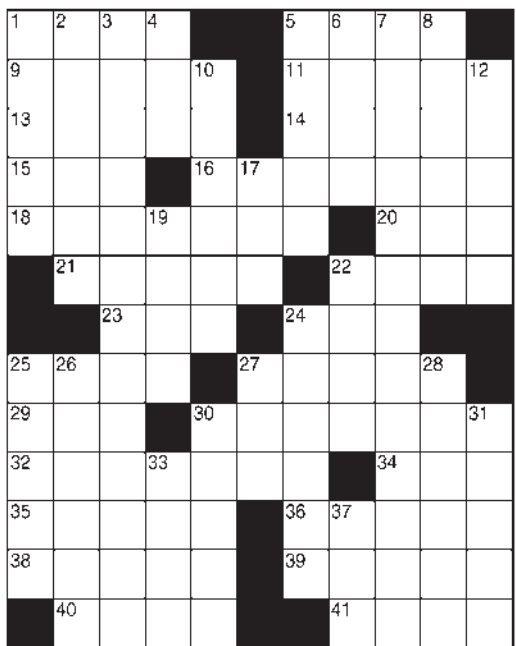
By THOMAS JOSEPH

**ACROSS** 39 Eagle's home  
1 2017 Pixar film  
5 Radiator sound  
9 First Hebrew letter  
11 Top players  
13 Corrupt  
14 Audacity  
15 Second person  
16 Tiny tribesmen  
18 Instructs  
20 Dr.'s org.  
21 Tart fruits  
22 Pub orders  
23 Bar order  
24 Brooch  
25 Loft setting  
27 Disgusted  
29 Imitating  
30 Chewy candy  
32 Some hounds  
34 Frilly wrap  
35 German steel city  
36 Unmoving  
38 Trap-shooting sport

**DOWN**  
1 Academy attendee  
2 Martini garnishes  
3 Wheat and rye, e.g.  
4 Be decisive  
5 Puts on the wall  
6 News article  
7 Features of dollars



8 "Help!"  
10 Dash's kin  
12 Western plateaus  
17 Word of accord  
19 Mint product  
22 Opera set in Egypt  
24 Iran, once  
25 Innocent ones  
26 "Seward's Folly"  
27 Dietary concern  
28 Illinois city  
30 Dollar units  
31 In a while  
33 Pursue  
37 Court divider



3-15

AXYDLBAAXR  
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

3-15

## CRYPTOQUOTE

J C M L G U K X Z B D X A W F W

Q A W T R S D D Z C W T X Q D D I X J R

T F F M X Z D I C W T J R X Z M D D Z .

— X K X C W M D A W D M

**Cryptoquote:** BELIEVE IN LIFE!  
ALWAYS HUMAN BEINGS WILL PROGRESS  
TO GREAT, BROADER, AND FULLER LIFE.  
— W.E.B. DU BOIS

## Cruise ship Schedule: March 10 - 14 2025

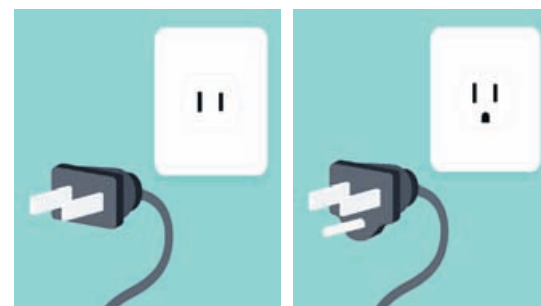
			ARR	DEPT	BERTH	
MON	10	QUEEN VICTORIA	08.00	17.00	B	1
		COSTA FORTUNA	08.00	17.30	C	1
		ADVENTURE OF THE SEAS	09.00	22.00	I	1
TUE	11	ROTTERDAM	08.00	****	B	1
		CARNIVAL MAGIC	09.00	22.00	C	1
		NORWEGIAN VIVA	13.00	21.00	I	1
WED	12	ROTTERDAM - Dept.	****	17.00	B	-
		GRANDEUR OF THE SEAS	08.00	****	C	1
		CORAL PRINCESS	09.00	18.00	I	1
THU	13	GRANDEUR OF THE SEAS - dept.	****	17.00	C	-
FRI	14	CLUB MED 2	08.00	13.00	C	1

## Helpful tips for your stay on Aruba

(Oranjestad)—When traveling to another country, especially for the first time, it is always better to be over-prepared than under-prepared. That is why we have a list of basic but important information that we think may come in handy to Aruba's visitors.

### Electrical power

Aruba generally operates on 110V to 127V supply voltage and 60Hz. There are also three types of outlets used on the island: type A with two flat prongs; type B with two flat and one grounding prong, and on occasion, type F with two round prong and two earth clips on the side. However, Type A is most commonly found in homes and establishments.



### Drinking water

The water that flows through the sinks of every house, hotels and other establishments is distilled and perfectly safe to drink. Aruba's drinking water exceeds WHO's international standards for water quality, so there is no need to buy bottled water from the store.



### Supermarket hours

Supermarket hours may vary depending on where you are staying on the island. Generally though, most supermarkets are open from 8am to 9 or 10pm, Monday through Saturday. On Sundays, supermarkets generally close earlier; mostly around 2pm.



### Safety

Since February 2024, Aruba has been categorized as the safest country in the Caribbean by The Telegraph, and many tourist that visit have often told us how they feel safe to explore the island or walk around at night. However, rare incidents do occur, so keep yourself and your belongings safe.





## One Tech Tip: Wasting too much time on social media apps? Tips and tricks to curb smartphone use



Women look at a phone while sitting on the pedestal of statue on International Women's Day in downtown Bucharest, Romania, Saturday, March 8, 2025.

Associated Press

By **KELVIN CHAN**  
AP Business Writer

**LONDON (AP)** — If you've got a smartphone, you probably spend too much time on it checking Instagram, watching silly TikTok videos, messaging on WhatsApp or doomscrolling on X.

It can be hard to curb excessive use of smartphones and social media, which are addictive by design. Reducing your screen time is often more than just a matter of willpower, especially for younger people whose brains and impulse control are still developing. If you're a phone addict who wants to cut down on the hours a day spent looking at your device, here are some techniques you can try to free up more IRL time:

**Delete apps**

An easy first step is getting rid of any apps you've been wasting time on.

Over the past year, I've deleted Facebook, Instagram and Twitter from my phone because I wanted to use them less. Now and then I'll have to go the app store and reinstall one because I need to do something like post a photo I took on my phone. (Sometimes I'll transfer the photo to my laptop and then post it to the web from there,

but usually, it's too much hassle.)

The danger with this approach is that if you do reinstall the app, you won't bother deleting it again.

**Use built-in controls**

Both iPhones and Android devices have onboard controls to help regulate screen time. They can also be used by parents to regulate children's phone usage.

Apple's Screen Time controls are found in the iPhone's settings menu. Users can set overall Downtime, which shuts off all phone activity during a

set period. If you want a phone-free evening, then you could set it to kick in from, say, 7 p.m. until 7 a.m. The controls also let users put a blanket restriction on certain categories of apps, such as social, games or entertainment or zero in on a specific app, by limiting the time that can be spent on it. Too distracted by Instagram? Then set it so that you can only use it for a daily total of 20 minutes.

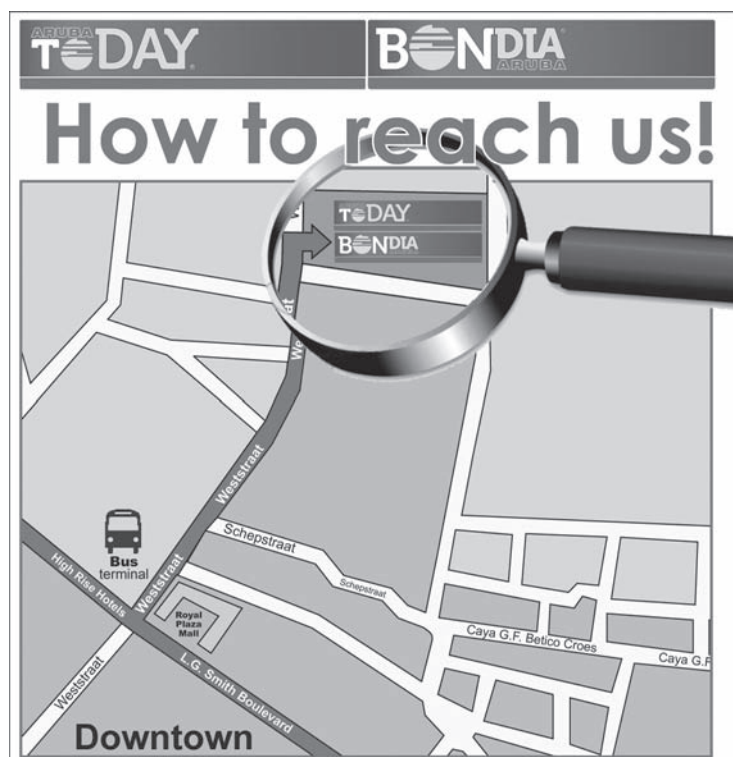
The downside is that the limits aren't hard to get around. It's more of a nudge than a red line that

you can't cross. If you try to open an app with a limit, you'll get a screen menu offering one more minute, a reminder after 15 minutes, or to completely ignore it.

Android users can use turn to their Digital Wellbeing settings, which include widgets to remind users how much screen time they've had. There's also the option to create separate work and personal profiles, so you can hide your social media apps and their notifications when you're at the office.

**Don't be distracted**

There are other little tricks to make your phone less distracting. I use the Focus mode on my iPhone to silence notifications. For example, If I'm in a meeting somewhere, I mute it until I leave that location. Android also has a Focus mode to pause distracting apps. □



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**San Nicolas:**

Seroe Preto: Tel. 584 4833

#### OTHER

Dental Clinic 587 9850

Blood Bank Aruba 587 0002

Urgent Care 586 0448

Walk-In Doctor's Clinic

+297 588 0539

#### EMERGENCY

Police	100
Oranjestad	527 3140
Noord	527 3200
Sta. Cruz	527 2900
San Nicolas	584 5000
Police Tipline	11141
Ambulancia	911
Fire Dept.	115
Red Cross	582 2219

#### TAXI SERVICES

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Prof. Taxi	588 0035
Taxi D.T.S.	587 2300
Taxi Serv. Aruba	583 3232
A1 Taxi Serv.	280 2828

#### TRAVEL INFO

Aruba Airport	524 2424
American Airlines	582 2700
Avianca	588 0059
Jet Blue	588 2244
Surinam	582 7896

#### AID FOUNDATIONS

Aruba Food Bank	Tel. 588 0002
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ARUBA TODAY NEWS



# Movie Review: Soderbergh's sleek spy thriller 'Black Bag' crackles

By **JAKE COYLE**  
AP Film Writer

If you're hosting a dinner for half a dozen British intelligence agents with the aim of ferreting out a mole, what should you cook?

For George Woodhouse (Michael Fassbender), who's preparing for four colleagues, plus himself and his wife, Kathryn St. Jean (Cate Blanchett), who, like him, is a high-level operative, it's chana masala with a few drops of truth serum.

"Will there be any mess to clean up?" Kathryn asks her husband as they're getting ready.

"With any luck," he responds.

So goes much of the crackling patter of "Black Bag," Steven Soderbergh's delicious marital drama cloaked as a sleek spy thriller. Lean and taut, the 93-minute "Black Bag" is more a sizzling amuse-bouche than full-course meal, but it's simmered to perfection.

George and Kathryn, as fellow agents at London's National Cyber Security Centre, don't seemingly have what you might call a traditional marriage. Each has their own secret ops, leaving large swaths of their lives off limits to the other. When George asks where Kathryn is flying off to



This image released by Focus Features shows Cate Blanchett, left, and Michael Fassbender in a scene from "Black Bag."

Associated Press

on Wednesday, she shrugs with a smile, "Black bag." In the movie's opening scene a slinky tracking shot that trails George into and out of a nightclub an agent named Meacham (Gustaf Skarsgard) gives him the assignment to track down the mole, with the added wrinkle that Kathryn can't be dismissed as a possible suspect. A cyber-worm device called Severus that's capable of hacking into nuclear facilities has gone missing. The fate of the world, as it so often is, is said to be at stake.

But, really, the state of George and Kathryn's marriage is what interests us. Ex-

treme though their situation is, their union is one that, like any couple, is built on trust and devotion, even if their professional lives demand the inverse.

When George, lying on top of Kathryn tells her he'd do anything for her, she coos, "Would you kill?" It's a fair-enough test to the bounds of wedded bliss, sure, but her second question matters even more. "Would you lie?"

Over that dinner a scintillating set piece around a darkened dinner table inside their London town house we can quickly gather just how much the truth means to George. He's re-

nown for his powers with a polygraph. As a youngster, he even brought down his own father, uncovering his affair. "I don't like liars," George says through clenched teeth.

They're joined by Colonel James Stokes (Regé-Jean Page); the in-house psychologist Dr. Zoe Vaughan (Naomie Harris); the ca-raousing spy Freddie Smalls (Tom Burke); and the newest NCSC recruit, cyber specialist Clarissa (Marisa Abela). Both are paired off in clandestine relationships that quickly emerge, among other secrets. More than state secrets, infidelity dominates the conversa-

tion.

Fassbender's spook is an agent of precision. He wears gleaming black-framed glasses. When only a few drops of sauce land on his cuff, he immediately withdraws to change his shirt. Hard as it would seem, Fassbender has found a character almost as dispassionate and monotone as his methodical assassin in David Fincher's "The Killer." This time, though, he's not a loner. Blanchett's Kathryn is kept more at a remove from us. She's mysterious and aloof a femme fatale, maybe, we're led to wonder. An "aroma of hostility" accompanies her, Zoe tells her in a psych evaluation. Is she the mole?

This is an insular film, taking place mainly in crisply composed interiors, aside from the lake George occasionally fishes for bass in. There, in a fitting encapsulation of a movie full of smooth surfaces with currents twisting underneath, the camera gently rests on the water's surface.

"Black Bag" follows a run of agilely directed thrillers by Soderbergh made with screenwriter David Koepp ("Presence," "Kimi"). They are both at the height of their almost-too-easy powers; the script, especially, is peppered with delectable dialogue. □

## Metallica's epic Mexico City show comes to Apple Vision Pro, bringing viewers closer to their hits



From left, members of Metallica, Kirk Hammett, Lars Ulrich, Robert Trujillo, and James Hetfield arrive on the red carpet at DAR Constitution Hall on March 20, 2024, in Washington.

Associated Press

By **JONATHAN LANDRUM Jr.**

**AP Entertainment Writer**  
**LOS ANGELES (AP)** — Metallica is bringing their powerhouse performance from Mexico City straight to viewers' faces courtesy of Apple.

The company said Tuesday that Metallica's show will be delivered in an immersive concert experience on the Apple Vision Pro video headset on Friday. The concert experience will feature the band's iconic hits including "Whiplash," "One" and "Enter Sandman."

Filmed during the sold-out finale of their M72 World Tour last year, Metallica's concert brings viewers closer to James Hetfield, Lars Ulrich, Kirk Hammett, and Robert Trujillo with high-resolution, 180-degree video and immersive spatial audio.

"With Metallica on Apple Vision Pro, you feel like you're right there: front row, backstage, and even on stage with one of the biggest bands of all time," said Tor Myhren, vice president of marketing communications at Apple. The company said Apple

built a custom stage layout featuring 14 of their immersive video cameras, including some that moved around the stage.

If you don't own one of the \$3,500 headsets, don't worry. Customers are able to book a Vision Pro demo to experience Metallica's performance at their local Apple store.

Other performances that have been exclusively shown on the Vision Pro includes Alicia Keys and Raye. The Weeknd also had his immersive music experience called "The Weeknd: Open Hearts." □



# Tokyo, Bristol and the A's in Sacramento are among the dates to watch for the MLB season

By JAY COHEN

AP Baseball Writer

**CHICAGO (AP)** — The major leagues are going to Tokyo and Tennessee. West Sacramento, too. There are some old friends on the schedule, and quite possibly, a chilly reception or two on the way.

Here are some dates to remember for the upcoming season:

**TOKYO SERIES TUESDAY, MARCH 18**

Los Angeles Dodgers at Chicago Cubs: Shohei Ohtani begins his second season with the Dodgers in his native country, taking on the Cubs in a pair of games at the Tokyo Dome. The two-game set marks the 25th anniversary of the Mets and Cubs playing the majors' first regular-season games in Japan. Ohtani is the main attraction in MLB's return to Tokyo, but the World Series champions also have Japanese pitchers Yoshinobu Yamamoto and Roki Sasaki, and the Cubs have two key Japanese players in Shota Imanaga and Seiya Suzuki.

**OPENING DAY THURSDAY, MARCH 27**

New York Mets at Houston Astros: Juan Soto makes his Mets debut when they visit Jose Altuve and the Astros on opening day. Soto signed a record \$765 million, 15-year contract in free agency, giving the Mets a boost after they made a surprising run to the NL Championship Se-



Los Angeles Dodgers designated hitter Shohei Ohtani, of Japan, follows through with his swing during the second inning of a spring training baseball game against the Cleveland Guardians, Tuesday, March 11, 2025, in Phoenix.

ries. He should help anchor a dangerous lineup for New York. The Astros traded Kyle Tucker to the Cubs in December, but they are well-positioned for another playoff run after signing Christian Walker in free agency.

**SOTO RETURNS FRIDAY, MAY 16**

New York Mets at New York Yankees: Soto plays his first game at Yankee Stadium since signing with the Mets in free agency. Soto was traded from the Padres to the Yankees in December 2023, and the four-time All-Star hit .288 with 41 homers and 109 RBIs in his lone season with the Bronx Bomb-

ers. After the Yankees were spurned by Soto, the AL East champions bolstered their roster by adding Max Fried, Devin Williams, Cody Bellinger and Paul Goldschmidt.

**TITO RETURNS MONDAY, JUNE 9**

Cincinnati Reds at Cleveland Guardians: Terry Francona manages his first game back in Cleveland since taking over the Reds in October. Francona was in Cleveland's dugout for 11 years before stepping down at the end of the 2023 season because of health reasons. After he departed, Stephen Vogt directed the Guardians

to the AL Central title and an appearance in the AL Championship Series. The former big league catcher was voted AL Manager of the Year.

**ALL-STAR GAME TUESDAY, JULY 15**

Atlanta's Truist Park hosts the All-Star Game four years after the event was moved to Denver's Coors Field over objections to changes in Georgia's voting rights laws. Atlanta also hosted the 1972 Midsummer Classic at Atlanta-Fulton County Stadium and the 2000 All-Star Game at Turner Field. The AL has won 10 of 11 after a 5-3 victory over the NL in last year's

game at Texas.

**SPEEDWAY CLASSIC SATURDAY, AUG. 2**

Atlanta Braves at Cincinnati Reds: There will be some serious speed and power on hand when Elly De La Cruz and the Reds take on Ronald Acuña Jr. and the Braves at Bristol Motor Speedway in Tennessee. An attendance record is a possibility at a venue that can fit 146,000.

De La Cruz had a major league-best 67 steals last year, to go along with 25 homers and 76 RBIs. Acuña is coming back after he missed most of last season because of a left knee injury. But Acuña joined the 40-40 club in 2023, hitting 41 homers and swiping a major league-high 73 bags on his way to the NL MVP award.

**BREGMAN IS BACK MONDAY, AUG. 11**

Boston Red Sox at Houston Astros: Alex Bregman returns to Houston when the Red Sox visit the Astros for the opener of a three-game series. Bregman spent his first nine seasons with the Astros, winning two World Series titles. The Gold Glove third baseman signed a \$120 million, three-year contract with Boston in February.

The Red Sox are expected to contend for the AL East title after they also acquired left-hander Garrett Crochet in a December trade with the White Sox. □

# WBO orders Oleksandr Usyk to defend title against Joseph Parker

**SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico (AP)** — Oleksandr Usyk has been ordered by the WBO to start negotiations for a title defense against Joseph Parker amid reported talks between the Ukrainian and Daniel Dubois for a fight to become the undisputed heavyweight champion.

Usyk defended his WBO, WBC and WBA belts in a unanimous decision over Tyson Fury in December, and Dubois holds the IBF title.

The 38-year-old Usyk stopped Dubois in the ninth round of their 2023 title fight, and British media reported this week that a rematch was in the works possibly at Wembley Stadium.

But the WBO has directed Usyk and Parker's teams to start negotiations. If they

don't reach terms in 30 days, the sanctioning body said it will call for purse bids.

The 27-year-old Dubois was set to fight Parker in Saudi Arabia last month but withdrew citing an illness.

Parker then beat Dubois' last-minute replacement, Martin Bakole, in a second-round stoppage victory.

Last May, Usyk became the world's first undisputed heavyweight champion in 24 years when he beat Fury in their first bout. Usyk later vacated the IBF belt and Dubois was elevated to champion.

The 33-year-old Parker is a former WBO champion. The New Zealander won the belt in December 2016 when he beat Andy Ruiz and lost it to Anthony Joshua 15 months later. □



Britain's Tyson Fury, rear, takes a blow from Ukraine's Oleksandr Usyk during their undisputed heavyweight world championship boxing fight at the Kingdom Arena in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, Sunday, May 19, 2024.

Associated Press





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## The Thunder swept Boston in the season series. Their next meeting would be in the NBA Finals

By **JIMMY GOLEN**  
AP Sports Writer

**BOSTON (AP)**—The Oklahoma City Thunder clinched a spot in the playoffs, and they did it against the team they could face when the NBA postseason reaches its peak.

Shai Gilgeous-Alexander scored 34 and Chet Holmgren added 23 points and 15 rebounds to lead the Thunder to a 118-112 victory over Boston on Wednesday night in a much-anticipated potential NBA Finals matchup.

"We're in March, not June," Thunder coach Mark Daigneault said after the Thunder swept the two-game season series against the defending champions. "So we're focused on March."

The Thunder also beat the Celtics in Oklahoma City on Jan. 5 in a game that Holmgren missed with an

injury.

If they meet again this season, it would have to be in

the NBA Finals.

"They've achieved what we're trying to accom-

plish, and there's no better test than that in the NBA," Gilgeous-Alexander said.

"Playing against them is always fun, it's always a really good challenge, and something that we could test ourselves against. I guess we passed the test so far."

The Thunder were the second NBA team to clinch a playoff berth this season; Cleveland, which is one win better, earned its spot on Friday. Last year, the Thunder clinched a spot in the postseason on March 31.

"It means we got better than we were last year. Ultimately, that's all you can ask for," Gilgeous-Alexander said.

"You put the work in, put the time in ... we took steps in the right direction. We got better and we, I guess checked a goal off the list a little bit earlier than last year, and we have a lot more to do." □



Oklahoma City Thunder guard Shai Gilgeous-Alexander (2) drive to the basket against Boston Celtics center Luke Kornet, rear right, and forward Jayson Tatum (0) during the first half of an NBA basketball game, Wednesday, March 12, 2025, in Boston.

Associated Press